

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 SR-02 ORM-01 MC-02 ACDA-05

NIC-01 /093 W

----- 053102

R 260750Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6780

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 2404

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION JAKARTA FROM SURABAYA FEB 25 REPEATED TO YOU:

QTE

SURABAYA 0149

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS ID PT PO

SUBJ: ALLEGED "LEFTIST TERROR" IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR

REF: A. JAKARTA 2285

B. SURABAYA 614

1. APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON ANTARA ARTICLE, WHICH CERTAINLY DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THE PLACE WHERE PIERCE AND I SPENT FIVE PLEASANT DAYS CHATTING WITH POLITICAL LEADERS AND TOURING THE COUNTRY SIDE IN MID-DECEMBER (REF B).

2. A FEW DAYS AGO I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM LUIS FRANCO RICARDO, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR, INFORMING ME THAT HE WAS LEAVING FOR PORTUGAL AND RETIREMENT ON FEBRUARY 18. HE
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DID NOT MENTION THE EXCITING EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THE ANTARA

ITEM. HE DID MENTION, HOWEVER, THAT BOTH UDT/FRETELIN HAD REJECTED THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED "STATUTE" FOR A PLEBESCITE IN OCTOBER, AS WELL AS HIS OFFER TO ALL PARTIES TO HELP HIM FROM A NEW "PRIVY COUNCIL" TO ADVISE HIM ON PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS IN THE INTERIM PERIOD. LETTER CAME THROUGH NON-INDONESIAN CHANNELS.

3. WE DID NOT FORM THE IMPRESSION DURING OUR SHORT VISIT THAT THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY OFFICERS IN DILI WERE LEFTIST. THE PROVINCE POLICE CHIEF COMMANDED A REGIMENT FOR EIGHT YEARS IN ANGOLA, AND SAID HE ENJOYED KILLING COMMUNISTS. THE CHIEF OF CONTINGENT ARE FROM THE TWON OF SINTRA, AND WE WERE TOLD THEY FORM THE NUCLEUS OF A "PRO-PORTUGAL CLIQUE" WHICH KEEPS TIGHT REINS ON LEFTIST ACTIVITY AMONG THE NCO CORPS. BOTH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AND MILITARY POLICE UNITS WERE SAID TO BE COMPOSED OF FORMER DGS PERSONNEL, AND WE NOTICED THAT DILI WAS PATROLLED AT NIGHT BY ROVING SCOUT-CARS FILLED WITH HEAVILY ARMED SECURITY POLICE. ALLEGATIONS THAT GOVERNOR LEMOS PIRES WOULD AUTHORIZE INDIGENOUS POLITICAL PARTIES TO BUY ARMS SOUND ABSURD.

4. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT REFUGEES HAVE CROSSED THE BORDER, WHICH RUNS THROUGH RUGGED AND UNPATROLLED TERRAIN, BUT WE DOUBT THEIR MOTIVATIONS WERE POLITICAL. THE ONSET OF THE RAINS ALWAYS SPARKS LAND DISPUTES AS VARIOUS TRIBES FEUD OVER SCARCE ARABLE LAND. PREVIOUS BORDER INCIDENTS ALSO STEMMED FROM CATTLE-RUSTLING. THESE INCIDENTS HAVE HITHERTO BEEN HANDLED AMICABLY BY THE TWO SIDES. WE DOUBT THAT ANY OF THE PARTIES IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR HAVE THE RESOURCES TO CONDUCT THE POLITICAL ACTIVITY DESCRIBED IN THE ANTARA ARTILCE, ESPECIALLY SINCE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR THE ROADS IN THE BACK-COUNTRY, I.E., ANYPLACE NOT WITHIN TEN KILOMETERS OF A MAJOR TOWN, ARE VIRTUALLY IMPASSABLE FOR NON-TRIBAL INHABITANTS. HOLAND

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